

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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USDOC FOR BEWT

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: CASC, CGEN, BGEN, UR, US
SUBJECT: CRAWFORD CASE - VOLUNTARY DEPARTURE OR
EXPULSION

REF: MOSCOW 21724

1. EMBASSY WOULD LIKE TO CLARIFY FOR THE RECORD THAT WE HAVE RECEIVED NO INDICATION FROM THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT THAT U.S. BUSINESSMAN FRANCIS JAY CRAWFORD WAS EXPELLED FROM THE SOVIET UNION. TASS REPORTED EVENING OF SEPTEMBER 8 THAT SUCH WAS THE CASE. HOWEVER, THE NEWLY ARRIVED INTERNATIONAL HARVESTER SENIOR REPRESENTATIVE FOR SOVIET UNION (CHELLMAN) INFORMED COMATT SEPTEMBER 9 (WELL AFTER THE FACT AND ONLY IN RESPONSE TO VERY SPECIFIC QUESTIONS) THAT WHEN HE WAS CALLED IN MORNING OF SEPTEMBER 8 BY MFT PROTOCOL CHIEF RAKHMANIN AND TOLD THAT CRAWFORD WOULD BE ALLOWED TO DEPART, RAKHMANIN ADDED ONLY THAT CRAWFORD "WOULD NOT
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BE GRANTED A VISA FOR ENTRY INTO SOVIET UNION IN FUTURE." ACCORDING TO CHELLMAN, RAKHMANIN DID NOT DESCRIBE THE ACTION AGAINST CRAWFORD AS EXPULSION.

2. IN RESPONSE TO JOURNALISTS' QUERIES FOLLOWING APPEARANCE OF TASS ARTICLE, EMBASSY SPOKESMAN EMPHASIZED IT WAS NOT RPT NOT EMBASSY UNDERSTANDING

THAT CRAWFORD HAD BEEN EXPELLED.

3. FACTS ARE THAT CRAWFORD DID VOLUNTARILY SUBMIT A REQUEST FOR AN EXIT VISA THURSDAY AFTERNOON, SEPT. 7; HE RECEIVED THAT VISA AROUND NOON, SEPT 8; AND THE WORDING IN THE VISA, "UPON TERMINATION OF WORK," IS STANDARD WORDING OF EXIT VISAS FOR BUSINESSMEN WHO HAVE BEEN ASSIGNED TO SOVIET UNION AND WHO ARE ENDING THEIR STAYS IN THE COUNTRY. BASING HIS ARGUMENT ON THESE FACTS, CRAWFORD MAY WISH TO MAINTAIN IN PUBLIC AS WELL AS IN PRIVATE THE POSITION THAT HE HAS NOT BEEN EXPELLED. TO EXTENT WE ARE ASKED, WE INTEND TO CONTINUE TO RESPOND ALONG LINES OF PARAGRAPH 2 ABOVE. (FYI: TO OUR KNOWLEDGE PRESS HAS NOT RAISED QUESTION WHETHER CRAWFORD MAY RETURN TO USSR; IF ASKED ABOUT THIS, WE WOULD RESPOND THAT WE PREFER THAT QUESTIONS ON CRAWFORD'S FUTURE PLANS BE ADDRESSED TO HIM OR TO I-H.) GARRISON

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